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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/335,377	06/17/1999	JOHN R. PLATE	02900.00004/	6413

24998 7590 12/12/2002

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EXAMINER

CULBRETH, ERIC D

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3616

DATE MAILED: 12/12/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/335,377

Applicant(s)

PLATE ET AL.

Examiner

Eric D Culbreth

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 30 September 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-33 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 1-19 and 22-33 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 20 and 21 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1. In response to appellant's remarks filed 9/30/2002, the finality of the last Office Action is withdrawn. Following is an action on the merits on the case.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

2. The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

3. Claims 20-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Laverda (of record) in view of Van Der Lely et al (newly cited).

Laverda discloses axle 3 connected to frame 1a (i.e., the vehicle body 1 is supported on appendage or member 1a) for relative movement and a system (valves 14, 18) for locking the axle relative to the frame when the frame is tilted more than a predetermined angle (relative to the axle; see column 3, lines 41-51, where automatic leveling ceases and the hydraulic circuit becomes inoperative when the maximum angle is reached). However, Laverda does not disclose a support for supporting a load, the support being pivoted to elevate the load relative to the frame. Van Der Lely et al discloses a housing 2 supporting a load (mowing platform 1 and elevator at column 1, lines 43-45), the support being pivoted at shaft 3 to elevate the load 2 relative to the frame (column 1, lines 48-52). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Laverda to include a support bearing a

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load pivoted on the frame as taught by Van Der Lely et al in order to harvest crops, as Laverda's vehicle is a harvesting machine.

Regarding claim 21, in the combination Laverda's limit switch 34 senses when the frame is tilted by more than a maximum or predetermined angle.

Allowable Subject Matter

4. Claims 1-19 and 22-33 are allowed.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Eric D Culbreth whose telephone number is 703/308-0360. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday, 9:30-7:00 alternate Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paul Dickson can be reached on 703-308-2089. The fax phone numbers for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703/746-3508 for regular communications and 703/308-2571 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-1113.

Eric Culbreth

Eric D Culbreth
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3616

12/9/02

ec
December 9, 2002